



**Office of the United States Attorney  
District of Arizona**

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE  
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## **SCOTTSDALE MAN SENTENCED FOR INVOLVEMENT IN AUTO THEFT RING**

PHOENIX - Vasile Valy Rosca, 44, of Scottsdale, Ariz., was sentenced here on August 29, 2005 to 24 months in federal prison and fined \$10,000 by U.S. District Judge David G. Campbell. Rosca is a naturalized United States citizen who was born in Romania and was the registered owner of VM Hy-Tech, a gun manufacturing business. Rosca was found guilty by a jury at the end of March 2005 of Conspiracy under Title 18, U.S. Code Section 371 and of Aiding and Abetting under Title 18, U.S. Code Section 2.

The evidence at trial showed that Rosca conspired with other defendants to steal motor vehicles from Canada and the U.S. The stolen vehicles were often moved or transported to or through Arizona. Before or after a motor vehicle was stolen, the defendants searched for and found a Vehicle Identification Number (VIN) from a "donor" vehicle, usually the same make, model and year as the stolen vehicle. The conspirators would copy or acquire the "donor" VIN or other identification markings. They would then make a matching fictitious VIN plate, almost identical to the manufacturer's original VIN plate on the "donor" vehicle ("VIN-cloning"), or remove the actual VIN plate from the "donor" vehicle ("VIN-switching"). The conspirators would then remove the original VIN and other markings from the stolen vehicle and replaced it with a "cloned" or "switched" VIN.

The conspirators also created counterfeit title/registration documentation for each "cloned" or "VIN-switched" vehicle, mainly using counterfeit Canadian documentation. Rosca and the other defendants used this counterfeit documentation to obtain fraudulent title and registration documentation from the State of Arizona. One defendant, Heidi Kay Nielsen, was an employee of the Arizona Motor Vehicle Department and converted the counterfeit documentation into false and fraudulent Arizona title/registration documents. Nielsen pleaded guilty and is pending sentencing.

Many of the "cloned" or "VIN-switched" vehicles were insured and the defendants falsely represented to law enforcement and insurance carriers that the insured vehicles had been stolen. The defendants, including Rosca, filed false police reports and fraudulent insurance claims to collect insurance proceeds. The conspiracy is estimated to have "cloned" or "VIN-switched" approximately 100 motor vehicles, and caused losses well in excess of one million dollars.

The investigation in this case was conducted by Special Agents of the Criminal Investigation at the Internal Revenue Service and detectives of the Chandler Police Department and the Arizona Department of Public Safety. The prosecution was handled by Howard Sukenic and Peter Sexton, Assistant U.S. Attorneys, District of Arizona, Phoenix.

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